

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for his careful review of this application. Claims 1-20 and 30-32 have been rejected. Claims 1, 12, 30, and 31 have been amended. Claim 4 has been canceled. The portion of specification relating to related applications has been amended to correct a minor typographical mistake. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendment and the following remarks submitted in support thereof.

Anticipation Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-2, 10, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,539,377 to Culliss. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,584,464 to Warthen. Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,675,159 to Lin et al. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully assert that Culliss, Warthen, or Lin et al. fails to identically disclose each and every feature specified in amended independent claim 1, amended independent claim 12, independent claim 13, or independent claim 32.

Independent Claim 1

Although the Applicants believe that the original pending independent claim 1 is defined over the art of record, the Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to further define determining whether a selected one of at least one answer is associated with the identified content and the received question, and further define identifying the question as an unanswered question when no answer is associated with the identified context and the received question.

It should be noted that canceled dependent claim 4 defines the determining and the identifying as defined in amended independent claim 1. The Examiner rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view of Lin et al. The Applicants note that Lin et al. was filed on July 27, 2000. However, Applicants' nonprovisional application claims the benefit of provisional applications that were filed on June 6, 2000, June 7, 2000, and July 5, 2000. The provisional applications were all filed before the filing date of Lin et al. Accordingly, the Examiner may not use Lin et al. as reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

Further, Culliss does not disclose determining whether a selected one of at least one answer is associated with the identified content and the received question, and identifying the question as an unanswered question when no answer is associated with the identified context and the received question, which is defined in amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Culliss.

Independent Claim 12

Although the Applicants believe that the original pending independent claim 12 is defined over the art of record, the Applicants have amended independent claim 12 to further define an authoring module adapted to identify unanswered questions and adapted to associate an answer with the unanswered questions. Culliss does not disclose such authoring module and amended independent claim 12 therefore is patentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Culliss.

Independent Claim 13

Independent claim 13 defines a computer implemented system for providing user assistance. In the system defined in claim 13, a suggestion module is adapted to provide a list of

questions and answers to a user of a computer executed application in response to a request from the user for assistance with the computer executed application.

In support of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection, the Examiner notes that Warthen teaches a request from the user for assistance with the computer executed application. Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's characterization of Warthen relative to independent claim 13 because the portion of the reference relied upon by the Examiner (col. 2, lines 48-50) does not teach a request for assistance with the computer executed application. Specifically, at col. 2, lines 49-50, Warthen discloses "that the user asks questions of an information server via a Web browser over an Internet connection." Accordingly, Warthen does not teach asking questions about a Web browser. Instead, for example, the questions relate to "info sport bicycling" and "King of Spain" (col. 4, lines 31-38). In contrast, independent claim 13 defines a request for assistance with the computer executed application. As Warthen merely teach questions relating to "info sport bicycling" and "King of Spain," the portion relied upon by the Examiner in support of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection does not teach a request for assistance with the computer executed application.

Independent Claim 32

Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Lin et al. As discussed above, the provisional applications were all filed before the filing date of Lin et al. Accordingly, the Examiner may not use Lin et al. as reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

For the above-stated reasons, Applicants submit that amended independent claim 1, amended independent claim 12, independent claims 13, or independent claim 32 is patentable

under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Culliss, Warthen, or Lin et al. Dependent claims 2 and 10, each of which depends from amended independent claim 1, are likewise patentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Culliss for at least the same reasons set forth above.

Obviousness Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,768,790 to Manduley et al. Claims 5-6 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view Lin et al. Furthermore, claims 11, 16 and 30-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view Warthen. Claims 14-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Warthen in view Lin et al. Claims 7-8, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view of Warthen and Lin et al. Further, claims 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view of Warthen and U.S. Patent No. 6,665,655 to Warner. As will be fully explained below, Culliss in view of Warthen and Lin et al. do not raise a prima facie case of obviousness against independent claim 19. Further, Culliss in view of Warthen do not raise a prima facie case of obviousness against amended independent claims 30 and 31.

Independent Claim 19

Independent claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Culliss in view of Warthen and Lin et al. As discussed above, the provisional applications were all filed before the filing date of Lin et al. Accordingly, the Examiner may not use Lin et al. as reference under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Independent Claims 30 and 31

Although the Applicants believe that the original pending independent claims 30 and 31 are defined over the art of record, the Applicants have amended independent claim 30 to further clarify that the identifying is in response to a request for assistance with a computer executed application, and have amended independent claim 31 to further clarify that the user question is associated with a request for assistance with a computer executed application. As discussed above, Warthen does not disclose a request for assistance with a computer executed application.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the art references must disclose or suggest all the claim features. Here, the Examiner may not use Lin et al. as reference under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and therefore, independent claim 19 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Furthermore, in view of the incorrect characterization of Warthen, the references as combined do not disclose all the features of independent claims 30 and 31. Accordingly, Applicants submit that amended independent claims 30 and 31 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Culliss in view of Warthen. Claims 3, 5-9, 11, 14-18, and 20, each of which depends from one of independent claims 1, 12, 13, 19, 30, 31, or 32, are likewise patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for at least the same reasons set forth above regarding the applicable independent claims.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims 1-3, 5-20, and 30-32 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (650) 428-0313.

Respectfully submitted,
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael K. Hsu", written in a cursive style.

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY UNDER 37 CFR §1.133 AND MPEP §713.04

A telephone interview in the above-reference case was conducted on May 9, 2006 between the Examiner and the Applicants' undersigned representative. The office action mailed on February 23, 2006 was discussed. Specifically, the rejection of claim 13 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,584,464 to Warthen was discussed. The Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for his time and attention in this case.